



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
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Attachment
MRCA
Agenda Item VII
November 1, 2004

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM: 
Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Officer

DATE: September 8, 2004

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item XI: Consideration of resolution authorizing the acquisition of surplus Los Angeles County property in the Sylvia Park area of Topanga Canyon (APNs 4440-008-900, 4441-009-900, 901, 902, 4441-012-900, 4441-014-900, 4441-016-901, 4441-015-901, 4440-010-900 through 905, 4440-011-901, 902, 4440-012-900 and 4440-016-901) and authorizing the acceptance of grant funds to acquire said property.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing the acquisition of approximately 62 acres of Los Angeles County surplus property in the Sylvia Park area of Topanga Canyon and acceptance of grant funds to acquire the property.

Background: On January 27, 2003, the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (Conservancy) authorized the waiver of first right of refusal on approximately 58 of the 164 acres of County surplus properties located in the Sylvia Park area to allow for their acquisition by the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Those parcels are shown at the eastern end on the attached aerial photograph.

At its November 24, 2003 meeting, the Conservancy authorized the waiver of first right of refusal on approximately 56.5 acres of the remaining 106 acres of Los Angeles County surplus properties in the Sylvia Park area. The Conservancy did not waive its right on eight parcels totaling 49.5 acres. Those eight parcels are located on both sides of Topanga Canyon Boulevard as shown on the attached figure. The County agreed to sell those eight parcels to the Conservancy's designee, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) for \$100,000.

In August of 2004, upon the Conservancy staff's reconsideration and negotiation, the County staff agreed to include an additional 10 parcels (11.6 acres) in a potential sale to the MRCA for the same price of \$100,000. The subject additional parcels flank the Theatricum Botanicum on the west side of Topanga Canyon

Boulevard. These 10 additional parcels are shown on the attached aerial as all of the red outlined parcels west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, except for the largest parcel which is a component of the original eight parcels totaling 49.5 acres.

The MRCA thus has the opportunity to acquire a total of 18 parcels comprising 62 acres for a total cost of \$100,000. The Conservancy staff specifically targeted those 18 parcels because of their high resource value and minimal to zero brush clearance requirements. The Conservancy added the subject 62-acre area to its Acquisition Workprogram at its August 30, 2004 meeting.

The Conservancy has not yet taken an action to fund the \$100,000. It is expected that the Conservancy staff will present an item to consider a grant of Proposition 12 or 40 funds to the MRCA to acquire the property at the Conservancy's October meeting. That grant most likely will cover MRCA costs in addition to the \$100,000 acquisition cost. The MRCA staff counsel is reviewing a County-prepared acquisition agreement between the MRCA and the County.

The County has been patient and generous with the Conservancy and the MRCA on this issue. In deference to the County's desire for official action authorizing acquisition by the MRCA, this item was brought before the Governing Board at this juncture.